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INFO RUCNAFG/AFGHANISTAN COLLECTIVE  
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RUEHLM/AMEMBASSY COLOMBO 7214  
RUEHKA/AMEMBASSY DHAKA 7278  
RUEHIL/AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD 0287  
RUEHBUL/AMEMBASSY KABUL 3405  
RUEHKT/AMEMBASSY KATHMANDU 7936  
RUEHLO/AMEMBASSY LONDON 1517  
RUEHMO/AMEMBASSY MOSCOW 0026  
RUEHKO/AMEMBASSY TOKYO 3861  
RUEHCI/AMCONSUL CALCUTTA 6496  
RUEHCG/AMCONSUL CHENNAI 6550  
RUEHKP/AMCONSUL KARACHI 5493  
RUEHLH/AMCONSUL LAHORE 3010  
RUEHBI/AMCONSUL MUMBAI 5734  
RUEHPW/AMCONSUL PESHAWAR 3646  
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RHHMUNA/CDR USPACOM HONOLULU HI  
RUCNDT/USMISSION USUN NEW YORK 2409  
RHMFISS/HQ USCENTCOM MACDILL AFB FL  
RUEHGV/USMISSION GENEVA 4712  
RHHMUNA/HQ USPACOM HONOLULU HI  
RHMFISS/HQ USSOCOM MACDILL AFB FL  
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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 04 NEW DELHI 006584

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TAGS: [PREL](#) [PGOV](#) [PTER](#) [PINR](#) [PBTS](#) [ENRG](#) [EPET](#) [KISL](#) [PK](#)  
IR, AF, IN  
SUBJECT: MEA ENGAGED ON AFGHANISTAN, DOUBTFUL ON PAKISTAN,  
AND PEEVED AT IRAN

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Classified By: DCM Geoffrey Pyatt for Reasons 1.4 (B, D)

11. (C) SUMMARY: In a recent discussion, MEA Joint Secretary Dilip Sinha told US that India:

- Could do more in Afghanistan but was worried about security
- Doubted the wisdom of Pakistan's agreements with Waziristan tribes
- Envisioned a robust economic conference that would not be a donor exercise
- Sought the Secretary's attendance at the Regional Economic Cooperation Conference on Afghanistan, starting Nov. 18 in Delhi
- Retained deep skepticism about Pakistan and possibilities for renewed dialogue
- Remained irritated that Iran welched on the LNG contract
- Continued to urge Iran to respect its NPT commitments

Sinha's comments offer opportunity in at least two areas: India can and may do more for Afghanistan and will likely announce new initiatives at the Delhi conference. Engaging New Delhi in our security discussions will be useful and we should give the Indians suggestions on how they can usefully contribute to Afghanistan's reconstruction. On Iran,

if we can get Pakistan to consider easing the rules on transit-across-Pakistan, it will not only boost the renewed Delhi-Islamabad peace process, but give India one less reason to engage with Iran. END SUMMARY.

#### AFGHANISTAN BORDER: SLIPPING AWAY?

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12. (C) MEA Joint Secretary for Pakistan, Iran, and Afghanistan Dilip Sinha told DCM, PolCouns, and D/PolCouns September 13 that the U.S. and India had enjoyed excellent coordination on Afghanistan for the past four years, but that press reports of Pakistani agreements with Waziristan tribes were "deeply alarming." DCM pushed back, arguing that press speculation to the effect that the US was walking away from Afghanistan had no factual basis. To correct those faulty impressions, the Embassy was sending leading diplomatic correspondents to NATO in Brussels to learn more directly about the full scope of USG efforts. Pointedly, the DCM added that we should clear the air by meeting each other, not by taking potshots in the press. DCM also added that the Waziristan agreement, far from being a capitulation, was just like agreements South Block used to sign with the tribes before Partition, and just like the government signs with regularity by India even in modern times with North East ethnic groups as a way of switching up its tactics from time to time. The agreement would require the tribes to expel foreigners engaged in Jihad, clarified the DCM, and no tolerance of any renewed Taliban activity would be permitted.

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#### IN AFGHANISTAN FOR THE LONG HAUL, BUT EXPERIENCING SECURITY PROBLEMS

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13. (C) Sinha said the Indian road projects had come under mounting attacks in recent months, and that projects were slowed as a result. In a series of attacks, Taliban insurgents had rocketed the road works using multiple barrel launchers positioned as much as ten kilometers away. The DCM offered that the 18-19 November Afghan economic conference hosted in Delhi would show the world that Karzai remained fully supported, and added that General Jones was highlighting, in public comments, the need for a more robust NATO presence in the southern provinces. MEA Afghanistan Country Director Aquino Vimal revealed that India has slated to deliver 2,500 body armor suits to the ANA in October as part of its commitment to help secure the country. Sinha added that Indian aid was peaking in various areas currently -- road building, wheat biscuits, school and hospital rehabilitation, and energy projects -- and India was facing a "budget crunch" as a result. Nevertheless, India, he promised, would entertain any GOA request for further support, to include training and scholarships, where further scope exists. India could usefully focus on the recurring polio problem in southern Afghanistan, and while doctors remained in five cities to enhance health infrastructure and improve facilities and diagnostics, the security threat was mounting. The DCM mentioned Afghanistan's interest in a short course for NCOs, and also suggested the US and India work together in Afghanistan much as USAID and India do in India to combat disease and promote good health policies. He expressed frustration that Indian deliveries of high protein biscuits must be routed through Iran because Pakistan denies transit rights.

14. (C) India, mentioned Sinha, will host a conference on Afghanistan's economy in Delhi starting November 18. Karzai would inaugurate the gathering, to which India planned to invite the G-8, five Central Asian states, Turkey, Pakistan, China, UAE, NGOs, and others. India hoped the US would be represented by the Secretary of State. The conference would not be a donor's session, but rather an effort to discuss ways to boost Afghanistan's economy. In conjunction with the government to government conference, the Federation of India Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FICCI) is organizing a regional business conference (in coordination with Afghanistan's development agency (ISA) and the Confederation of Indian Industries (CII)) to consider ways to attract investment in infrastructure,

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agriculture, energy, and transportation.

PAKISTAN: SHOW ME FIRST

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15. (C) Sinha said India wanted action, not words, from Islamabad. Pakistan had indeed taken some actions to curb terror in 2004 and 2005, but trouble always revived, lamented Sinha. The spike in terror in 2006, especially high profile attacks like Mumbai, had greatly complicated relations. Even though police continued their investigations, the discovery of military explosive residue such as RDX "reflects the usual foreign hand" and a measure of training and sophistication not available domestically. Infiltration also continued from Bangladesh and Kashmir, and Lashkar-e-Tayiba leader Hafez Saeed continued to thrive despite occasional house arrest. In any case, India had to re-engage with Pakistan. A revived Composite Dialogue would be difficult to sustain if terrorist incidents continued. "The mind set remains the same," insisted Sinha, with Pakistani agents continuing to help plan attacks against Indians in Afghanistan. Musharraf continued to propagate the fiction that India had eight consulates in Afghanistan, although there are only four, the same as in pre-Taliban Afghanistan, and the same as Iran and Pakistan. Pakistan was not interested in the truth, and that did not augur well for a revived or sustained Composite Dialogue. Some progress continued on people-to-people ties, trade, pilgrimages, and family travel, but since January, Pakistan had accepted no Indian proposals whatsoever. Pakistan's opinion seems to be, mused Sinha, "Enough CBMs, let's do Kashmir." India could not "do" Kashmir in light of the spike in infiltration and the string of grenade attacks that killed the Kashmir tourism season and blew up numerous buses and tourists. Pakistan's hand and instructions in that "were clear." India wanted Kashmiri insurgents to join the mainstream political dialogue, and would continue to do so in any case. The DCM said Washington was working to get S/CT's Hank Crumpton to Delhi ASAP to help explain Pakistan's counter-terrorism efforts and to keep the dialogue going with India on terror in the region, including in Pakistan and Bangladesh.

STIFFED ON GAS BY IRAN, MIFFED ON NUKES  
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16. (C) Sinha said Iranian Deputy FM Safari's visit to Delhi in August resulted in pressure by India on Iran to abide by its NPT

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obligations and stick to the price India and Iran had negotiated last year on LNG supplies. India also stressed that Iran could only renegotiate gas prices after five years according to the terms of the contract. What they finally agreed was that a pricing consultant would look into the matter and issue a report. The two sides also agreed to continue to cooperate on the road project that would connect the Iranian port of Chabahar with Herat so Indian exports could avoid Pakistan's continued ban on Indian ground transit across Pakistan. Sinha commented that Ahmedinejad seems to want to be the "chief spokesman" of the Revolution, but Iran's recent actions in Lebanon, Iraq, and even Lucknow and Hyderabad to stir up trouble did not inspire confidence. Sinha lamented Iran's posturing, asking, "if they walk away from the P6 offer, what is their agenda?" Signals, he worried, were not encouraging. What was needed from Iran now, he added, was action, not words.

COMMENT: OPPORTUNITIES AND LIMITATIONS  
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17. (C) We were encouraged to hear Sinha say that India would consider doing more in Afghanistan. Before the November conference, we should suggest to New Delhi a list of actions India could take to assist Afghan reconstruction so we can influence whatever they announce at the conference. We should also rope the Indians into our Afghan security discussions because their donor efforts are increasingly affected by the situation on the ground. India believes that elements in Pakistan are actively targeting Indian officials in Afghanistan, including the Indian Ambassador (septel). On Iran, dissonance over the gas deal is an opening we can exploit. The road project to Afghanistan remains troublesome for the Indians, and if we push Pakistan to permit transit across its territory, India would have less incentive to work with the Iranians. As for Pakistan, Sinha reveals the depth of skepticism in the MEA establishment; he and many other Indians remain from Missouri, the Show-Me State.  
END COMMENT.  
MULFORD